



There has been some recent heightened press coverage on the experience with corrosivity on lead pipes that followed Washington D.C.'s conversion to chloramines, which was recently in the news. According to water quality officials with the SFPUC, the problems in the Washington D.C. water system stemmed from not balancing the pH of the water to control corrosivity following the conversion. The problem had nothing to do with the chemistry of chloramines. In San Bruno, we have experienced no shift in pH values since the conversion to chloramines.

We also fielded questions about pipe materials, specifically lead, used in the local water systems connected to the San Francisco regional water system. San Bruno does have some older lead service lines located between the water main and the meter, but they are usually very short in length (sometimes only a couple of feet long). In addition, there is a coating that has built up over time inside the pipes that serves to insulate the water from the lead content in the pipe. It is not anticipated that chloramines will affect the stability of this coating.

The City performs various water quality tests on either a daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly basis to ensure that our water quality has not been compromised. This includes a quarterly testing for the gasoline additive MTBE, which has never been detected in our groundwater supplies. We also perform tests to monitor the lead and copper content in the water, which is required by the State once every three years. The most recent set of test data was obtained in 2003 on water leaving the tap from a sampling of 36 San Bruno homes. The results from this testing were excellent. Out of 36 sampling locations, 34 showed traces of lead that were so small as to be undetectable, and the other two locations were measured at substantially lower levels than the action limits set by Federal water quality standards.

Approximately 1/3 of the 36 sampling locations we utilize are located in older subdivision areas believed to contain the remaining lead pipe service lines. As a result of these favorable lead detection test results in San Bruno, there are no requirements by the EPA or the State to remove these remaining lead service lines. However, as a matter of practice, lead service lines are removed and replaced by copper anytime that they are encountered during our normal course of maintenance operations or capital improvement projects. Copper pipes do not have lead in them, but brass fittings that are sometimes used with copper pipes might contain lead.

To insure the continuing quality of San Bruno's drinking water, the City will be exceeding the minimum Federal and State-mandated testing requirements, and will be performing lead and copper testing on an annual basis starting this summer.

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